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Research Article

**STUDY ABOUT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION AND BREASTFEEDING
AMONG WOMEN IN QASSIM, SAUDI ARABIA.**

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Abstract:

Background: Postpartum depression is a disorder that can lead to serious complication for both mother and her baby. Despite the important health benefits of breastfeeding, its relation with postpartum depression remains unclear. In this study, we aimed to know if there is any relation between postpartum depression (PPD) and breastfeeding among sample of women in Qassim region, Saudi Arabia

Method: It was a cross sectional study. Data collected from 200 mothers attending vaccination sessions at primary health care facilities in Buraydah, Bukaria, Uniza & Alrass

(EPDS) was used to determine prevalence of Postpartum depression it is a Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale validated widely used as screening tool. Additional questions included for the purpose of the study. Data analyzed using SPSS

Result: A total of 200 mother participated in the study. The majority (53%) of mothers were in the age range of 25 to 54 years. The results showed that 70% of mothers were breastfeeding their babies. The prevalence of depression was alarmingly high (more than 53% of the sample). However, the relationship between PPD and breast feeding was found to be statistically insignificant. **Conclusion:** The study didn't show an association between PPD & breastfeeding, however, the high prevalence of postpartum depression in Qassim calls for urgent attention and immediate action to bring those numbers down. More researches are recommended to find possible solutions for the problem.

Key words: Breastfeeding, postpartum depression, depression, mothers, relationship

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INTRODUCTION:**Background:**

Postpartum depression can be defined as moderate to severe depression in a woman after she has given a birth. postpartum depression affecting large amount of women, it is interesting to know what are the causes of postpartum depression and how it prevented.

Breastfeeding known to have a lot of benefits for the mother and her baby. breastfeeding can help to synchronize the sleep patterns of them, that will help in decrease levels of stress and increase levels of happiness. Although there is no definitive relationship between postpartum depression and breastfeeding in terms of which generally causes the other.

The nature of relationship between postpartum depression and breastfeeding is not clear yet. It's currently thought that breastfeeding may protects against postpartum depression ⁽²⁾. As well, it's thought that depression and stopping the breastfeeding early can increase the risk for negative infant feeding outcomes ⁽³⁾⁽⁴⁾⁽⁵⁾.

Breast feeding help to maintain a woman's endogenous retinoid (vitamin A related compounds) below levels where mood disorders, including depression and suicide, have been noticed ⁽⁶⁾. the excess retinoid level will be transferred from mother to infant. A baby utilizes these vital nutrients, that will help to decrease toxic high levels of retinoid in the mother ⁽⁷⁾ and neuroendocrine responses of childbirth to stop.

Significance of study

- There is growing awareness of the importance of mental health issues specially in postpartum period in Western societies, but very little information about Muslim and Arab countries ⁽¹⁾.
- Also, maternal mental health is a neglected issue in Saudi Arabia generally and Qassim region specially.
- Increase attention to the possible connection between breast feeding practices and postpartum depression.

METHOD:**Study design, area, population and sampling**

The study was a cross sectional study, Data collected from 200 mothers attending vaccination sessions at primary health care facilities in Qassim from four different regions Buraydah ,Bekeriyah, Unaizah & Alrass.

The inclusion criteria of the study will be: mothers without previous history of any mental illness.

The Exclusion criteria: mothers who suffered from any diagnosed psychological problems before pregnancy, mothers with children under 15 days were excluded aiming to avoid confounding the symptoms of postpartum depression and the phenomenon known as “maternity blues” or “baby blues”, a condition characterized by symptoms such as emotional lability and feelings of sadness and anxiety, often observed in the first two weeks postpartum.

Methods of Data collection

A form with closed questions that measures demographic characteristics, pregnancy related health problem and breast-feeding practices used for data collection. Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS), a tool developed by Cox et al. which has been translated and validated in several countries, was used to screen for postpartum depression.

The EPDS contains questions about mother's feeling in the last week. In this study, the scale was applied and only the mothers who met the inclusion criteria will be selected.

List of Variables

- demographic characteristics
- depression related scale variables:
 - feeling happy
 - feeling guilty
 - anxiety
 - difficulty of sleeping
 - feeling sad
 - crying
 - suicidal attempt
- breast feeding practices:
 - occurrence
 - duration
 - frequency
 - pregnancy related health problem
 - Postpartum depression assessment

The Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS), a tool developed by Cox et al. which has been translated and validated in several countries, was used to screen for postpartum depression. The EPDS contains questions about mother's feeling in the last week. In this study, the scale was applied.

Table1: Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
breastfeeding * depression categories	200	100.0%	0	0.0%	200	100.0%

Data analysis plan

All values analyzed using Edinburgh Postpartum Depression Scale (EPDS) where a score of 10 or greater was considered at risk for clinical depression positive score. Postpartum depression screening results compared between patients that were breast feeding, bottle feeding or both.

Ethical Consideration

All participants informed that their responses will be kept confidential. Data will be coded in the database using a unique identification number. The data will

be stored on a password protected laptop, and all data will be maintained confidential.

RESULT:

A total of 200 mother participated in the study (table1). The prevalence of depression was alarmingly high more than 53% of the sample (table 2). The results showed that 70% of mothers were breastfeeding their babies (table 3). However, the relationship between PPD and breast feeding was found to be statistically insignificant (p value= 0.27).

Table2: depression categories

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 10 or less	94	47.0	47.0	47.0
more than 10	106	53.0	53.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Table 3: breastfeeding * depression categories Cross tabulation

Count		depression categories		Total
		10 or less	more than 10	
breastfeeding	Yes	71	70	141
	No	9	11	20
	Sometimes	14	25	39
Total		94	106	200

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.599 ^a	2	.273
Likelihood Ratio	2.632	2	.268
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.562	1	.109
N of Valid Cases	200		

CONCLUSION:

The study didn't show an association between PPD & breastfeeding, however, the high prevalence of postpartum depression in Qassim calls for urgent attention and immediate action to bring those numbers down. More researches are recommended to find possible solutions for the problem.

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